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Free and clear

Murder exoneree overjoyed, planning vacation

By Noah Hurowitz

The Brooklyn Paper

The latest man exonerated following a wrongful murder conviction under former district attorney Charles Hynes wants to dedicate his life to helping free innocent people in prison — but first, he is hitting the beach.

District Attorney Ken Thompson announced on Jan. 5 that he was vacating the conviction of Clinton Hill native Derrick Hamilton, who spent 20 years in prison for the 1991 shooting death of Nathaniel Cash despite his insistence that he was in Connecticut at the time of the murder. Cash's girlfriend, the only witness, recanted her testimony, and pushed for Hamilton's release. Now that his name is cleared, Hamilton has big plans, but on the top of his to-do list is taking a trip to Puerto Rico.

"It feels like a million pounds off my back," Hamilton said. "I feel like I've been reborn.'

Cops arrested Hamilton in March. 1991, and he said that at the time he though the whole thing would blow over once he showed he was innocent. But he never even made bail.

'I knew I didn't do it, and I thought, 'I can stand a couple months at Rikers," Hamilton said. "It was so depressing. You can say you're innocent a million times, but no one is going to believe you."

Hamilton was released in 2011, but was subject to the same restrictions as other parolees. He had to obtain permission to leave the state and inform potential employers of





District Attorney Ken Thompson (left) is poring over cases brought by his predecessor Charles Hynes (right). In just over a year, Thompson has exonerated 11 men, and counting.

a convicted killer.

Now he can move freely, and his record is officially scrubbed of any trace of the wrongful mur-

When Thompson signed the documents freeing him of the murder rap and everything that came with it, Hamilton said he was overcome with emotion

"To actually be invited in and hear him say, 'You were right,' was indescribable," he said. "I wanted to go up and hug the guy. It was the best day of my life.

One of the cops who helped put Hamilton away was retired, nowdisgraced detective Louis Scarcella, whose record has come under intense scrutiny by a wrongful-conviction review team assembled by Thompson, and who has seen five

his status. On paper he remained homicide convictions he helped secure be overturned.

> Hamilton said he feels plenty of anger at Scarcella for putting him away in the first place, but he reserved most of his fury for Judge Edward Rappaport, who presided over his trial and mul-

> tiple appeals.
> "What he did was worse than Scarcella," Hamilton said, "He had the opportunity to right what he did, but he never did. He knew Scarcella was crooked but believed him anyway. Judges who don't uphold the Constitution should be taken off the bench."

Thompson, whose campaign focused on alleged prosecutorial misconduct under 23-year top prosecutor Charles Hynes, said his exoneration of Hamilton and others is an attempt at restoring faith in the courts.

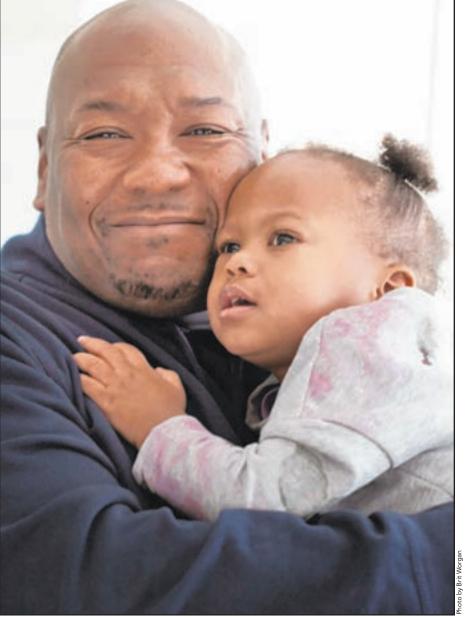
'Wrongful convictions ultimately destroy the lives of the people who are wrongfully convicted, as well as their families, and also do damage to the integrity of the justice system," he said in a statement. "The people of Brooklyn elected me to ensure that justice is done and that is what my decision to vacate Derrick Hamilton's conviction reflects."

A longtime critic of Hynes who helped exonerate David McCallum cheered Thompson's latest overturned conviction, his 11th since taking office, casting it as a blow against Hynes's legacy of corruption.

"You gotta hand it to him. He's not sweeping anything under the rug," said John O'Hara, who Hynes once prosecuted for voting outside of his district. "All of Hynes's convictions were bad. Nothing straight came out of that office.'

Hamilton praised Thompson, but said he is troubled that people who worked on his case and others involving Scarcella still have high-ranking jobs in Thompson's office. Anne Gutmann, the prosecutor who relied on Scarcella's work to put Hamilton behind bars, is still in the District Attorney's Office, overseeing the Intake Bureau, which processes the early stages of criminal cases.

"I think he has an important task ahead of him and so far he is doing a great job," Hamilton said. "But there are still people in this office who don't want to see justice done, and it taints the process."



Derrick Hamilton with his 2-year-old daughter Maia. Hamilton was exonerated on Jan. 5 after spending 20 years in prison for a 1991 murder in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

SPOILER: This T-shirt isn't made in Brooklyn.

Judging a look by its cover

We blow the lid off of int'l chain West Elm's bogus 'Made in Brooklyn' line

By Matthew Periman

The Brooklyn Paper Made in where, now?!

The Dumbo home-furnishing store West Elm, mother ship of an international chain, is hawking a line of Brooklyn swag in its online and brick-and-mortar outlets that includes hats, growlers, and T-shirts bearing the phrase "Made in Brooklyn."

The "Made in Brooklyn Market Beanie" is certainly artisanally priced at a cool \$24, \$8 more than a comparable American Apparel cap. A description in the online store reads:

'Rep the city where it all began with our classic, cuffed Mar-ket Beanie featuring our exclusive Made In Brooklyn logo.

Though we don't often refer to Brooklyn as a city, we at The Brooklyn Paper are as against the Mistake of 1898 — the incorporation of the city of Brookyln into New York City — as anybody. But closer



inspection of the head-warmer reveals that not only is it not made in United States.

The online store describes it as

"imported."

The tag on the actual item is more

descriptive: 'Made in China'

The borough's leading business booster said he is hardly surprised a national retailer would cash on Kings County's cachet.

'As we already know, the Brooklyn brand is hot, not just here in Brooklyn, but across the world including in China," said Carlo Scissura, president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Scissura's group rolled out a certification program called "Brooklyn Made" earlier this year as a way to weed out Kings County posers and to make sure real Brooklyn companies get the credit they are due.

The Chamber continues to believe 'Brooklyn Made' truly means Made in Brooklyn," Scissura said.

The growler and shirt are made elsewhere in the United States, a

See **BRAND** on page 10

G'pointers slam waterfront park plan

City's first stretch of green disappoints residents need to change something, they need to come back to the community."

By Danielle Furfaro The Brooklyn Paper

The city ignored much of what Greenpointers wanted to see in a planned park on a bank of Newtown Creek, residents said after Parks Department reps unveiled a new design last week

The plan for Newtown Barge Park includes a kids' baseball field, a grove of trees, and bench-lined pathways leading to a creek overlook. Neighbors were dismayed that the proposal doesn't include a dog run, a basketball court, or adult sports fields, and that it is also missing several aesthetic elements called for in a decade-old waterfront plan.

In a startling reversal of the common complaint that there is not enough for the youth to do, one neighborhood activist told park planners at the Jan. 8 presentation that the design is too kid-friendly.

You are reshaping the whole thing and everything is for kids," Michael Hoffman said. "Where are the adults supposed to go?"



man sounds off.

The existing park is an acre of concrete used for handball and other sports. The city's plan calls for 2.2 acres of greenery, artificial turf, and plastic fences and benches, materials that another local griped wouldn't be environmentally friendly.

'We should call this 'Hydrocarbon Park' or 'Off-Gassing Park,' because everything in the park will be plastic,' Darren Lipman said. "Can we not do better than this?"

Much of the design that the parks department presented goes against guidelines listed in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Waterfront Access Plan that locals spent months weighing in on in 2004 and 2005. That plan calls for wooden benches and paving stones throughout the public portions of the two neighborhoods' waterfront, but the new design includes the plastic benches and asphalt pathways instead. Some Greenpointers want the parks department to abide by the earlier prescription.

"These elements are supposed to have consistency from the top to the bottom of the waterfront, and that is not what we are getting," said Greenpoint resident Katie Naplatarski. "They should be honoring that agreement, and if they

A parks department spokeswoman said that the agreement is not binding for public land, but that the agency tries to stick to it as much as it can.

"Although zoning requirements generally do not apply to parkland, the parks department seeks to design parks to be substantially consistent with neighboring open spaces to the extent feasible," Maeri Ferguson said.

Park designers said they had a lot more than community concerns to factor in when mapping out the greensward.

"We wanted to keep the park as open as possible," said engineer Gary Sorge of the firm Stantec, which designed the park for the city. "It was a challenge creating protections against storm surges while allowing access. But many of the decisions came down

to matters of money, according to a parks department rep.

"A lot of it was a question of budget," said Martin Maher.

Over the course of the meeting, Maher and parks administrator Ed Janoff



Newtown Barge Park is part of the dramatic transformation underway on the Greenpoint waterfront.

repeated that many elements that did not make it into the Newtown Barge Park design would make it into the design of the nearby Box Street Park, which is also in the works, but less far along in the planning process. But residents said they worried they would wait and find their ideal elements missing yet again. In response to the heated debate, the Community Board 1 parks committee moved to hold off on a planned Tuesday presentation of the park plan. Instead, the committee will wait for neighbors to convene a task force to try to strike a compromise with the parks department.

Greenpoint's waterfront is also slated to get two residential developments containing 12 towers with 6,200 apartments.



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STARS LINE UP

Kings Theatre's schedule announced

By Noah Hurowitz and Nathan Tempey

The Brooklyn Pape

Let the good times roll! The Kings Theatre has announced its initial 2015 schedule, and it is chock full of bigname acts young and old, tending toward the old, to follow up the Feb. 3 grand opening featuring Diana Ross.

'We are thrilled to host such a diverse roster of artists from around the globe for our inaugural year of live music, dance, and theater," said Matt Wolf, director of the 3,000-seat Flatbush venue, in a statement.

Here's who's coming: Sarah McLachlan, Lilith Fair extraordinaire, March

Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, pop survi-

vors, March 21 Disney Live! presents "Three Člassic Fairy Tales,"

for the kids, April 2–5 Mavado and Capleton, dancehall legends, April 10 Widespread Panic, jam

band heroes, April 24–25 Crosby, Stills, and Nash, proving folk's not dead, May 15–16

Gladys Knight, Empress of Soul, June 6

"Tales from the Silk Cotton Tree," a musical play incorporating sonic stylings from across the Caribbean, June 20

Moscow Ballet's "Great Russian Nutcracker," Dec

"Annie," just in time for the holidays, Dec. 15-27

The Theatre will host its first public performances on Jan. 27, ahead of the grand opening, with a free, ticketed show featuring local acts, including the Brooklyn Ballet and the Brooklyn Youth Chorus.

The shows will end nearly four decades of abandonment and restore the former picture palace to its glory of nearly a century ago, albeit not as a single-screen movie-house. The Loew's Kings Theatre opened its doors in 1929, just months before the stock market crash that set off the Great Depres-



Gladys Knight will warm Brooklyn music lovers up for the beginning of summer in early June.



The halls are lined with carpet, wall fabric, and elaborate plasterwork. All that is missing is the public.

sion. Movie-going was more of a high society experience then, and the theater reflected that, with marble floors, walnut wood walls, and massive chandeliers modeled after those in Paris's opera house and the Palace of Versailles.

It closed in 1977, and it was a husk of its former self when construction began in January,

By then, thieves had absconded with light fixtures and the pipes of its grand or-gan, mildew had destroyed drapes, and water damage had taken its toll on much of the plasterwork. But a good deal of the original walnut walls and marble floors remained in place, and enough plaster detail was intact on one side of

molds of and recreate on the opposite side.

The Brooklyn Paper got a sneak peek at the interior ahead of the opening and we can report that nearly everything is in place but for the curtain on the stage, the lights in the marquee, the five bars inside, and a contract with the stagehand union. On Jan. 9, the Fire Department was busy testing alarms, tickettakers and concessions staffers had just departed from a training session, and swaths of carpet were newly unprotected, now that nearly all the period paint-job and ornate plasterwork has been completed

"This could all be open to the public right now," said Steven Ehrenberg, the theater's director of production, as he conducted a tour.

The theater's director of marketing said that the announcement of Diana Ross's imminent visit made a splash. and that the theater itself will too, once people get a first

"We're very pleased with the public's response to our grand opening act, and we're excited to show the public the grand snace we've restored," Charley Magrew said.

Asked how theater honchos plan to keep the massive venue busy year-round, Magrew and Wolf said that they will hold down the middle of the borough venue spectrum. "We're going to bring in larger acts that locals might

not see otherwise," Magrew said, adding that managers' long-term plan is to host 200 or more shows per year. Wolf, the theater's head, said

Barclays Center has showed that it can work.

"Barclays proved the demand is there," he said.

For high rollers, the theater is offering balcony seat packages that come with perks including extra legroom, reserved parking, separate bathrooms, a separate entrance, an "express lane" to the bar, wait service, and more, starting at \$1,500, and ranging as high as \$6,950. One catch is that the cost only reserves tickets, which members then still have to purchase. Similar "seat licenses" on the lower level reserve purchasers the right to buy tickets for prime seats for a year. The cost: \$4,950.

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Revenge of the 'Coffee Nerd'

Need a fix? Our arts editor's new book is java script

By Nathan Tempey

The Brooklyn Paper Our readers may think that we in the editorial department at The Brooklyn Paper spend our meager spare time drinking ourselves into a stupor as we obsessively refresh our email to see if we have received a response to that Freedom of Information Law request — and they wouldn't be far off — but at least one member of the crew has been busy sipping a more stimulating beverage, and writing a book. Now all that responsibility-taking and hard work has paid off and arts editor Ruth Brown is officially a published author, with her book "Coffee Nerd" printed and ready to grace store shelves next week. The tome is an idiot's guide to the "third wave" of coffee culture that is taking hold in Brooklyn.

I pulled her away from the daily grind to learn

Nathan Tempey: Why is your book something Brooklynites need now?

Ruth Brown: New York was a little later to the thirdwave coffee explosion than some other cities, but now there is some really great coffee coming in and out of Brooklyn. Probably more than anywhere, here you have roasters from all over the world.

You can get coffee from the West Coast. Blue Bottle and Stumptown have got roasteries here. Toby's Estate, which is from Australia [Ed. note: So is Ruth], set up a roastery here. You've got places like Budin in Greenpoint who are importing super-freshly roasted. amazing coffee from Scandinavia. I don't think anywhere else in the country would have the customer base to make the economics of that work.

If you want to appreciate that level of coffee and pay extra money for it, you should probably understand why you're paying the extra money for it. And that's where my book comes in.

NT: And is Brooklyn a hub of the citywide activity?

RB: There are some pretty good cafes and roasters running out of Manhattan

NT: Sacrilege! **RB:** That's a fair comment. A lot of the best coffee is definitely in Brooklyn. I think it would be really hard to roast in a lot of Manhattan, so I assume not many people are

NT: In the book it sounds like you're arguing that there's been a seismic shift in the coffee industry.

RB: I don't know if I'd say there's been a seismic shift because in the late '70s and '80s what you saw pre-Starbucks was a similar thing, in terms the artistry and the origins. And then it went a bit nuts and started to shift more towards the Frappuccino stuff. So in a way it's almost an extension of that, just taken more nerdy

and more extreme. NT: Is specialty coffee something that the casual consumer is going to see infiltrating the coffee-shop around the



Arts editor Ruth Brown (above) wrote a book (right) that breaks down the most obscure aspects of highend coffee so that even the most hopeless instant drinker can understand.

corner from her house? RB: Oh, sure. You're see-

ing more places talk about things like having single origins, doing manual-brewing techniques. You're seeing places that I call 2.5-wave places. Places that are not quite doing things to the extreme that the third-wave places are, but are beyond what they were doing five years ago. Not everyone's trying to do what the really hardcore guys are, and that's cool.

Starbucks actually has a non-Starbucks-branded cafe in Seattle where they do more cool techniques. And they did bring in pour-over filters to a lot of their stores, though I don't think it ever took off. They brought in that blonde

They were the ones who popularized that super-dark roast and got everybody drinking it. The blonde roast is a reaction to that lighter style of roasting that is more popular now. The idea behind that style of roasting is that you can actually taste the provenance, the distinctive features of the beans.

Starbucks just started selling flat whites, and I think that is mostly because it's associated with a lot of the cooler third-wave coffee shops. Probably because a lot of them are either run by Australians or they picked it up from the ones that are. And then the media started writing about it a lot. So serving a flat white became a kind of signifier

NT: On the subject of exotic coffee trends, the thing in your book I was most surnrised by is the kopi luwak phenomenon. Can you ex-

RB: Oh, man. In Indonesia and the Philippines, civet cats eat coffee beans that are disand people roast those beans and make coffee. I couldn't quite get to the bottom of whether really people believe it's a delicacy or that was the only coffee people had. A lot of the places producing the best coffee in the world do not have access to the best

coffee in the world. Anyway, they developed

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a reputation for being a delicacy. The idea was that the cats only select the best and ripest beans to eat and there is some enzyme in their stomach that does something to the beans that makes them special. They became one of those early viral topics in the West — cat-poop coffee and how rare it was. Because of the lack of product - you have to feed the cherries to the cats and then wait for them to s--out the beans - and because of the buzz around it, it be-

came very expensive. A lot of people started to create farms because if you want to do this in the wild you have to follow civet cats around and pick up their s---. It's not a very productive way of making coffee. So people created horrific farms to force-feed the civets the coffee cherries. A British TV station did a pretty horrific expose of it. And most reports said that the vast majority of stuff that said it was kopi luwak wasn't actually kopi luwak. But when it reached a fever point there were places

charging 20 bucks a cup. Increased scrutiny shamed people into not selling it. And quite a few people tried it and said it was not good.

NT: You don't think we're in danger of having a groundswell of people doing it in their apartments with their house cats?

RB: I don't think other cats would eat coffee cherries. And it's pretty hard to get coffee cherries outside of coffee-producing countries. So, no, on

practicality alone. NT: As far as horrific stuff job of not glossing over all of the economic exploitation and slavery and environmental degradation that goes into making coffee, while also not having it overtake the rest of the book. How did you strike

that balance? **RB:** I'm glad to hear that I did strike the balance. It was a hard part. Most of the books I

read in research tended to be only about that or barely mention it. It's one of those things that comes and goes in trends, when we think about where our food comes from, or where our clothes come from.

There's no point in glossing over slavery, because it's a big part of the story, as with sugar and a lot of com-

In terms of modern stuff, I was blunt about it and there was one bit where I said. 'Look, you're an a---- if you don't care about this stuff, but I can't force you to care about it." What more can you say? "You should give a s---?" Most people care more about price than labor, I think.

NT: Do you mind briefly of the \$8 cup of coffee?

RB: Sure. I understand fancy coffee. I think coffee should cost 80 cents from my guy in the kiosk."

I think, as with anything in the First World, if it's cheap, somebody else is paying that expense somewhere along the time. The coffee is 80 cents because the farmers who made it were horribly exploited. They probably did a decent amount of damage to the land growing that coffee. The person selling it to you may not have health insurance. It's probably not very good coffee, which is probably the least important part of that equation.

The other side of that is that when coffee is expensive, it's probably not because the person is trying to rip you off. It's because it's been grown much more carefully by workers and farmers who were paid better and they've taken better care of the land, and the people making your coffee might be working under slightly better conditions. You also might be buying it from a location that costs more in rent. Just taking quality and taste out of that equation, these things are a big factor of cost. And then quality, obviously.

If you looked at the margins, I don't think [quality coffee purveyors] are making a s--- ton of money. That's just how much it costs to get their coffee. You can say, "I don't want to pay that," and that's fine, but it's like saying, "I don't want to buy imported caviar."

You're not necessarily being ripped off. That's just what imported caviar costs.

In terms of luxury items, you can, now in Brooklyn, buy some of the best coffee, roasted by some of the best roasters, made by really good baristas, and it's going to cost you under 10 bucks. I think

that's pretty good.

NT: Would you have included so many puns had you not been working at The Brooklyn Paper when you wrote this?

RB: My puns might not ways been very fond of puns. That's one of the reasons I came to work for The Brooklyn Paper

modities.

summarizing your defense

why people are like, "Screw

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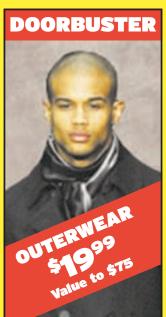
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Cops: Kid robs Chinese restaurant on Fulton Street

88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Cops arrested a 16-yearold boy who they say robbed a Chinese restaurant on Fulton Street at gunpoint on Jan.

The youngster allegedly swiped a tip jar from the counter of the eatery near Washington Avenue at 1:35 pm and turned to flee the scene, police said. When an employee gave chase, the suspect turned, pulled from his waistband what looked like a handgun, and said "Stop following me or I'll shoot," according to a report.

Officers canvassed the area and found the accused kid nearby, a report says.

Anybody home?

A man was arrested after he allegedly tricked a woman into coming out of a Grand Avenue apartment on Jan. 10 to attack and rob her, according to a report.

The victim was visiting her friend at the building near Putnam Avenue when she answered a knock on the door, cops said. A voice on the other side told her someone was trying to speak with her, and when she stepped out into the hall, the accused grabbed her by the neck, according to the authorities.

"B----, give me your phone," he supposedly

The victim chased the suspect outside and alerted a nearby cop, who caught up to the man, 45, at Grand Avenue and Fulton Street, then slapped the cuffs on him and recovered the phone, a report

Twin terror

A group of young ruffians jumped a pair of twin teachers outside a school on Clermont Avenue on Jan. 6, police said.

The teachers, twin brothers, were leaving the building between Park and Myrtle avenues at 6:30 pm when one of them overheard that two students were planning a fight, according to a report.

"I'm gonna call someone!" a 16-year-old supposedly yelled as her ran past.

Then the delinquents swarmed the teachers, punching and kicking them, offi-

The educators suffered facial and neck injuries, but refused medical treatment, per NYPD officials.

Deed undone

A motorist acted quickly to save a stabbing victim on N. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene early on the morning of Jan. 10, cops said.

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telling his savior he had been device, cops said. "done dirty" and lifting up his shirt to reveal an eight-inch stab wound that was gushing

blood, police said. The passerby loaded the wounded man into his car and drove him to Woodhull Medical Center, where doctors immediately performed surgery,

according to a report. The man gave no information to cops, but upon canvassing the area near where he had been found, police found his car idling with keys in the ignition and blood stains covering the driver's seat and driver's-side door-panel, officers said.

Time to run

A villain robbed a woman at Dekalb Avenue on Jan. 5, according to the authori-

The victim was heading in the direction of Clermont Avenue when the scoundrel approached and asked for the time, a report says. The woman said, "no," but the punk bashed her in the head with a blunt object, knocking her to the ground, cops

The brute then rifled through her victim's pockets, swiped her iPhone 6, and fled toward Willoughby Avenue on Clermont Avenue, officers said.

Playing games

A prowler struck an apartment on Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene on Jan. 6, cops said

The sneak made it into the dwelling between Cumberland and S. Oxford streets using the rear fire escape, according to a report.

The crook absconded with a Play Station 3, its controllers, a Vaio laptop, a pair of sunglasses, a Wii, and four Wii controllers, a haul worth \$1,799, police said.

78TH PRECINCT

Park Slope

Going down

A social call turned into a throbbing headache when a crook robbed a man in the elevator of a Gowanus building on Third Avenue on Dec.

POLICE BLOTTER 🐲 Find more online every Wednesday at

BrooklynPaper.com/blotter

The victim tried to pay a visit to a friend's apartment in the complex between Warren and Baltic streets at 12:20 pm, and upon finding his pal out, began to leave the building, according to a report.

He boarded an elevator to head downstairs, but on the elevator an unseen brute cracked him over the head, knocking him out cold, cops said. When the man regained consciousness, his tormenter had swiped his Galaxy S3 phone and an iPhone 4S, per police.

Man without van

Thieves stole a man's ride from its parking spot outside his home on Second Street in Park Slope sometime overnight on Dec. 28, cops said.

The fellow parked his white Dodge van legally between Seventh and Eighth avenues at 5 pm, and when he returned to the spot at 10 am the next day the vehicle had vanished. officers said.

Taking a raise A former employee of a

Seventh Avenue store stole money out of its cash register over Christmas, according to a report.

Police say video footage captured the employee, who had worked at the corner shop near 11th Street for about two years, taking approximately \$1,500 from the register between Dec. 24 and Dec. 26.

Men with a van Two thieves stole a man's

motorcycle on Saint Marks on Dec. 28, police said.

The victim parked his hog between Fifth and Sixth avenues at 7:45 pm and discovered it missing at 8:15 the next morning, cops said.

A surveillance video captured two men swiping the white 2009 Yamaha from its spot, loading it into a white van and driving away with

their loot, according to a re-

Roaming fee A pair of thieves snatched a phone from a woman in Prospect Heights as she headed home from the Bergen Street

2 and 3 train station on Jan. 1, officers said. The woman was near Carlton Avenue at 11:15 pm when the two fiends ran up behind her, one bumped into her, and the other snagged the iPhone 6

Plus, according to a report. **Moving pains**

As if moving were not bad enough, a thief absconded with a woman's laptop from her soon-to-be-former Lincoln Place apartment sometime overnight on Dec. 30,

cops said. The woman told police she left her MacBook Pro on a table in her basement apartment between Fifth and Sixth avenues at midnight, but when she checked on it at 10:30 the next morning, the laptop had vanished, according to a re-

She told cops that movers had been clearing out the apartment, with about six or seven men going in and out at a time.

— Noah Hurowitz

68TH PRECINCT Bay Ridge-Dyker Heights **Double trouble**

A gun-wielding goon robbed two Bay Ridge residents in a week. Here's the

• The first incident went down at the corner of 99th Street on Jan. 3.

The victim was about to walk into his apartment building near Shore Road at 9 pm when a fiend flashed a black handgun and demanded cash, police said. The triggerman took \$200 without hurting the victim, a report states.

 \bullet The same galoot stole \$10

92nd Street on Jan. 10, law The dastardly duo then or-

Gate crasher

to a report.

police said.

7, officers said.

a window guard and broke

into a 71st Street home in Bay

Ridge on Jan. 5, according

the home near Sixth Avenue

at 12:30 pm and found that

a prowler had cut the bars

on a backyard window, ran-

sacked the pad, and made

off with cash and jewelry,

A thief stole a laptop, cell-

phone, and backpack from a

delivery truck parked at 68th

Street in Bay Ridge on Jan.

near Fourth Avenue at 2:05 pm

and stepped inside a restau-

rant to grab a bite, but when

he came back, he realized

a crook had snuck into the

truck and taken his stuff, po-

A brute kicked in a guy's

front door and stole elec-

tronics from his home near

72nd Street in Bay Ridge on

Jan. 8, according to the au-

home near Sixth Avenue at

11:30 pm to find that some-

one had busted his door and

taken his electronics, offi-

cers said. — Max Jaeger

94TH PRECINCT

Greenpoint-Northside

A pair of masked robbers

The manager of the store

stormed into a Bedford Ave-

nue phone store on Jan. 9 and

near N. 10th Street said that

the two desperados stormed in

at 7:43 pm and one pointed a

black gun at him and custom-

 $ers\, and\, demanded\, that\, they\, all\,$

robbed it, officers said.

Phoning it in

The victim returned to the

Door-buster

thorities.

The driver parked his ride

Truck pickup

The victim returned to

dered the manager to put the enforcement officials said. items into a black laundry bag The victim was leaving a bank near Third Avenue and to stay in the office unat 5:13 am when the bandit til they had left, according whipped out his pistol and to a report. took the cash, again without hurting the victim, po-

Day break-in

Burglars broke into a woman's McGuinness Boulevard apartment on Jan. 6 and stole A cat burglar cut through her property, cops said.

The victim said she was away from her home between Norman and Meserole avenues from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, and when she returned, she found her Chanel Maxie. cellphone, video game system, and Rolex watch all pilfered.

Monetary lapse

A woman left her purse at a Bedford Avenue bar on Jan. 2, but when she went back to find it, it was gone, according to the authorities.

The woman said she went to the watering hole at 3 am and set her purse on the hook, then left a few minutes later without it.

She realized it was gone and came back to the nightspot at about 4 am, but her purse, which contained her phone, credit card. debit card, license, and cash, was nowhere to be found.

Side eyes

A miscreant stole the side mirrors off of a parked car on Manhattan Avenue on Jan. 1. police said.

The victim said he parked his car between Leonard Street and Driggs Avenue at 3:30 am, and when he came back at 11 am, he found that both of the mirrors had been broken off and stolen.

90TH PRECINCT

Southside-Bushwick

Bad directions

A pair of tough guvs robbed a man on Manhattan Avenue on Jan. 10 after asking him for directions, cops said.

The 24 year-year-old victim said he was near Stagg Walk at 12:10 pm when the pair of punks came up and asked him how to get to the L train, and one made like he

"Give me your stuff," the goon supposedly growled.

The victim handed over his cellphone, headphones, cellphone case, debit card, credit card, Colombian driver's license, school identification, and medical card, and the scoundrels scrammed, according to the authorities.

Grab and go

A mugger grabbed a woman on White Street on Jan. 11 and stole her cash, law enforcement officials said.

The 32-year-old victim said she was near Siegel Street at 11 pm when the villain grabbed her by the arm and shook her.

"Hand over vour money." the brute supposedly said.

The victim handed over \$80 in cash and the robber ran off, officers said.

Altered take

A gang of galoots followed a drunk man and beat him Montrose Avenue on Jan. 11, police said.

The victim said he was very drunk between Humboldt Street and Bushwick Avenue at 4:40 am when he noticed the four lugs following him.

One ran up and bashed the victim in the face with a blunt object, then the whole quarrelsome quartet hopped into a gray sedan and drove off down Bushwick Avenue, according to a report. The victim suffered a cut to his face and emergency personnel took him to Woodhull Medical Center for treatment.

Cellar service

A burglar broke into a Metropolitan Avenue restaurant's basement office on Jan. 11 and ran off with a wad of cash, officers said. The manager of the eatery near Havemeyer Street said he encountered a weirdo in the basement at a few minutes past midnight. The guy told him he was there to apply for a job, but the manager

told him to scram, per cops. Video shot the next morning shows the sneak prying into the office and taking \$2,000, cops said.

– Danielle Furfaro

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

January 16-22, 2015

nevent

A pro-wrestling extravaganza bodyslams into Dumbo

By Danielle Furfaro The Brooklyn Paper

Dumbo. A professional wrestling extravaganza is coming to Gleason's Gym on Jan. 17, where a huge line-up of babyfaces and heels will take to the mat to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Brooklyn club the World of Unpredictable Wrestling. Stars on the bill include Mexican Lucha Li-

bre star Marcela, Japanese wrestler Takaaki Watanabe. and Devon Dudley, who has wrestled for World Wrestling Entertainment. But the show will also hope-

fully help a few lesser-known wrestlers make a name for themselves, said organizer Johnny Rodz, who is the head of the World of Unpredictable Wrestling.

"The wrestlers get to have practice and exercise and exposure," said Rodz, who is a former World Wide Wrestling Federation wrestler and now teaches the spandex-clad stars of tomorrow out of the famed boxing gym. "The scouts come in and get to see how hard these people work."

One such wrestler looking to flex his muscles on the show will be East Flatbush resident Juan Almenas, who goes by the stage name Ultimate Security. Almenas said he has already been selected by scouts from bigger promotions to try out twice.

"They give you a three-day tryout and torture you and look at you from every angle to see what you are all about," said Almenas, 29, who first started training



The Juan and only: East Flatbush resident Juan Almenas is hoping to get his big break in professional wrestling on Jan. 17.

when he was 18 years old.

But despite the pain and suffering, the 235-pound contender is hoping he will get

picked again. "I respect these guys so much and this tling in the 1980s, and he said the school

is what I want to do," said Almenas. "I am here for the long haul."

Rodz started the World of Unpredictable Wrestling as soon as he retired from wres-

has been helping wrestlers get their start ever since.

"A lot of stars have made it out of here." he said. "You cannot make money doing

Tapes 'n tapes: Julian Fader gets his cassette on at Gra-

The reel world Bushwick

Recording studio launches best-of cassette tape

By Danielle Furfaro The Brooklyn Paper

ust out your boom box and get your fingers ready for some manual rewinding.

The guys behind a do-ityourself Bushwick recording studio are celebrating two years in its current location by releasing a cassette-only compilation of music recorded in the space over the past year. Gravesend Recordings owners Julian Fader and Carlos Hernandez said the 18 tracks on the tape feature not only the songs they like listening to the most, but also the ones that hold the best memories.

"They are about essential moments for us based on our own experience in a session," said Fader. "Like one song might remind me of a week in July when we were sweating. It is personal to us, and I

hope that comes across.'

The pair, who both play in indie soul back Ava Luna, said they started the recording studio several years ago in the basement of a church in Gravesend hence the name. They then bounced around without a real home for a period, before moving into underground arts space Silent Barn when the organization relocated onto Bushwick Avenue in 2012.

MUSIC

Gravesend Recordings compilation issue 2 tape release at Silent Barn (603 Bushwick Ave. between Mel rose and Jefferson streets in Bushwick, www.silentbarn. org). Jan. 16 at 8 pm. \$8.

Fader and Hernandez will launch the compilation tape with a show at Silent Barn on Jan. 16, featuring performances from Sam Owens of indie rock band Celestial Shore, dreamnon act Meenk, lo-fi psych outfit Video Daughters, and Philadelphia avante-pop group Laser Background. The tape

also includes tracks from art rockers Convertor, surf stylists Shark?, grungey duo Laughing Fingers, and industrial rock ensemble Death Ray Architect, amongst others.

This is the second compilation cassette the Gravesend Recordings two-some have put together, though they say this one is much longer than last year's. Fader said the pair like the cassette format because it is cheaper than a vinyl record and more personal than a compact disc or download.

"It is nice to have something physical to represent your purchase other than just something on a computer," he said.

BOOKS

Love and Haiti

This is a very different tale of two cities

A Haiti-born writer who grew up in both Portau-Prince and Brooklyn has published a novel featuring a character navigating the very same dual



identity. Author Dimitry Elias Leger said his book "God Loves Haiti," which he will read from at PowerHouse Arena in Dumbo in Jan. 22, explores the question that he and so many of his jet-setting peers have grappled with how to stay connected to Caribbean culture after leaving their homeland.

'How is patriotism negotiated when you have the ability to live anywhere in the world?" he said.

Leger, who spent almost 20 years in Brooklyn and now lives in Switzerland, worked as a journalist in New York and Miami for many years. In 2010, he became an advisor to the United Nations in its disaster recovery operations after the 2010 Haiti earthquake. The natural disaster provides the setting for "God Loves Haiti."

Leger said the novel centers on a love triangle between a woman and two men. The story is told through a series of flashbacks, alternating between the perspectives of the main characters

Natasha, her husband, and the "love of her life," Alain — weaving together vignettes from before and after the devastating disaster.

"As their dreams get shattered, they all try to come to grips with their dreams before the earthquake — and after," he said.

Legger said the novel is a work of fiction, but the Alain character — who grew up in both New York and Haiti — uses language that mimics the author's go-to cusses, which he said is a simple way to convey the nuances of nationality.

'Your language — your mother tongue, as they say — becomes clearly the language you're most comfortable cursing in," he said. "When things go bad, he's like, 'f---.' His language is as Brooklyn as can be.

Now that Leger is a father, he said he understands why some families split their time between the two locations of his childhood. "Haiti is a beautiful place, the Caribbean is awe-

some — if you can give your kids a summer vacation other than where they went to school in, it is great," said Leger. "The best of both worlds."

Dimitry Elias Leger at PowerHouse Arena [37 Main St. between Water and Front streets in Dumbo, (718) 666–3049, www.powerhousearena.com]. Jan. 22 at 7 pm. Free.

- Vanessa Ogle

READING

Truck yeah!

This guy loves talking trash!

A Park Slope illustrator has penned a children's book that celebrates the unsung hero of Brooklyn's streets — garbage trucks. Stephen Savage said his new book "Supertruck" chronicles the adventures of a lowly garbage truck who, when

a blizzard strikes, dons a snowplow and a new identity save the day

Savage said was inspired when he saw garbage trucks lined up to become snowplows near his Red Hook studio and thought about how the new duty transforms them into secret agents of salvation

for people who rely on the roads.

People in Brooklyn curse garbage trucks, but all of a sudden, in a really bad blizzard, when they came out, everyone cheered," said Savage. "I just thought it would be nice to have a humble hero," he said. "At the end of the book no one knows he saved the day, and he doesn't need big press for what he's doing.'

Also, he said, kids really like trucks.

Savage has illustrated or written six other books for kids, and is also a regular contributor to the New York Times, where he illustrates

"I like keeping my feet in both worlds," he said. "It's fun to be able to do something for the op-ed page and also a book about garbage

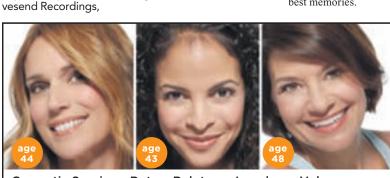
In that spirit, Savage will not only give a live reading of "Supertruck" for youngsters at the New York Transit Museum Downtown on Jan. 24, but he is also holding one for their parents at BookCourt in Boerum Hill on Jan. 16.

"It's more fun to do it at night so we can have wine and beer and talk like adults," he said.

Savage will also have a not-so-secret guest joining him at the grown-up shindig — Deartment of Sanitation commissioner and fellow Park Sloper Kathryn Garcia.

Stephen Savage at BookCourt [163 Court St. between Pacific and Dean streets in Boerum Hill, (718) 875–3677, www.bookcourt.com], Jan. 16 at 7 pm. Free. And at the New York Transit Museum Boerum Place and Schermerhom Street Downtown, (718) 694–1600, mta.info/mta/museum], Jan. 24 at 1:30 pm. Free with museum entry.

— Noah Hurowitz



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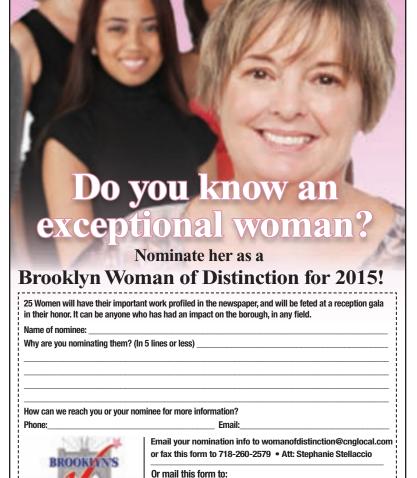
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WHERE TO G

EDITORS' PICKS

FRIDAY

Jan. 16



Sonic smackdown

It is a battle royale of boogie. Head On — a monthly dance party that pits two genres of music head-to-head with winner decided by which generates the most grooving — is squaring off soul music and disco in a Motown vs. Studio 54 contest. Will Supremes-era Diana Ross triumph over "Love Hangover" Diana Ross? Only dance can decide

10 pm at Baby's All Right [146 Broadway at Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 599-5800, www. babysallright.com]. Free

SATURDAY

Jan. 17

The Brooklyn Paper • www.BrooklynPaper.com • (718) 260-2500

Those about to rock Dude, is my face okay?

I think you melted it

off. The young shredders of the Brooklyn School of Rock will give a double-header performance at the Rock Shop. These minor musicians will bring some anarchy in Park Slope with a punk rock show at 2 pm, before the room starts to smell like teen spirit for a set of '90s tunes at 4 pm.

2 pm at Rock Shop [249 Fourth Ave. between Carroll and President streets in Park Slope, (718) 230-5740, www.therockshopny.com]. \$10.



MONDAY

Jan. 19

Making waves

Malia Obama's favorite rapper and Bedford-Stuyvesant native Joey Bada\$\$ drops his new album "B4. Da.\$\$" with a show at Rough Trade. Buying a copy of the album earlier in the day scores you a ticket to the show (while supplies last), and the first 50 people will also get their copy signed after the show.

7 pm at Rough Trade [64 N. Ninth St. between Kent and Wythe avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 388-4111, www.roughtradenyc. com]. Free with album.

WEDNESDAY

Jan. 21

Trivial pursuits It is a Q&A about the

Q and the A! Transit and trivia buffs can put their heads together at the New York Transit Museum's Transit Trivia night. Previous years have challenged contestants to identify photos of subway stations and decipher transit-themed puzzles, in addition to general questions on the subway lines, buses, and ferries we love to hate.

6:30 pm at New York Transit Museum [Boerum Pl. at Schermerhorn Street in Downtown, (718) 694– 1600, web.mta.info/mta/ museum]. \$15.



THURSDAY

Jan. 22



Love stories

The Kane Street Synagogue's annual Brooklyn Israel Film Festival kicks off tonight with a screening of the 2013 documentary "Do You Believe in Love?" about a paralyzed matchmaker who does not believe in love. There will be a post-film question and answer session with director Dan Wasserman.

8 pm at Kane Street Synagogue [236 Kane St. between Tompkins Place and Court Street in Cobble Hill, (718) 875-1550, www.kanestreet.

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

FRI, JAN. 16

PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, BRUCE IN THE USA: Tribute to Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. \$20. 6 pm. Brooklyn Bowl [61 Wythe Ave. between N. 11th and N. 12th streets in Williamsburg, (718) 963–3369], www.brooklynbowl.com

MUSIC, ZLATNE USTE GOLDEN FES-TIVAL: Celebrating 30 years of live Balkan and Roma music. \$30–\$80. 7:30 pm. Grand Prospect Hall [263 Prospect Ave. between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Park Slope, (646) 844–4653], www.goldenfest.org.

MUSIC, THE VASELINES, AMANDA X: \$25 (\$22 in advance). 8 pm. Bell House [149 Seventh St. at Third Av-enue in Gowanus, (718) 643–6510], www.thebellhouseny.com.

MUSIC, OUTMUSIC AWARDS BEN-EFIT CONCERT: The ninth annual OUTmusic concert awards the best in the LGBTQ music entertainment scene, and features a lineup of LGBTQ artists. All proceeds will go to the Brooklyn Community Pride Center. \$30 (\$20 in advance). 8 pm. Littlefield [622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855–3388], www.little-fieldnyc.com.

MUSIC, THE LOWLIEST ONE, JESSE ANDREWS, HAMIN REED, NEV-ERSINK: \$8. 8 pm. Trash Bar (256 Grand St. at Driggs Avenue in Wil-liamsburg, (718) 599–1000], www. thetrashbar.com.

MUSIC, MIKE PACE AND THE CHILD ACTORS, ARMS, LAME DRIVERS: \$8.8:30 pm. Union Hall [702 Union (718) 638-4400], www.unionhallny.

DANCE, "SWAN LAKE": Performed by the Mariinsky Ballet Theatre Company. Starting at \$30. 7:30 pm. BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene), www.bam.org.

THEATER, "YOUARENOWHERE": An-

drew Schneider's work experiments with sensory overload via quantum mechanics, parallel universes, and Craigslist's "Missed Connections" in an interactive new-media landscape that explores what it means to be here now. \$20. 7 pm. The Invis-



You're a wizard, Harry!: The Nets and the Wizards bring bas-ketball magic to Barclays Center on Jan. 17.

COMING SOON TO BARCLAYS CENTER

SAT, JAN. 17

SPORTS, LIU BROOKLYN BLACK-BIRDS VS. MOUNT ST. MARY BLUE KNIGHTS: \$15-\$25. 11:45 am and 2 pm.

SPORTS, BROOKLYN NETS VS. WASHINGTON WIZARDS: \$35-\$3,000.8 pm.

SUN, JAN. 25 MUSIC, LINKIN PARK: \$69.50-

\$98.50. 7:30 pm.

MON, JAN. 26

SPORTS, BROOKLYN NETS VS. PORTLAND TRAILBLAZERS: \$35-\$3,000.7:30 pm.

THURS, JAN. 29

MUSIC, CHRIS BROWN WITH TREY SONGZ AND TYGA: \$69.75-\$150.75. 7:30 pm.

FRI, JAN. 30

SPORTS, BROOKLYN NETS VS. \$3,000. 7:30 pm

SAT, JAN. 31

MUSIC, IGOR KRUTOI GALA CON-**CERTA:** Composer is joined by Russian singers including Filipp Kirkorov, Kristina Orbakaite, Irina Allegrova, and Valeriy Leontiev, and more, \$65-\$955, 7 pm.

620 Atlantic Ave. at Pacific Street in Prospect Heights (917) 618-6100, www.barclayscenter.com.

Find lots more listings online at

BrooklynPaper.com/Events

ible Dog Art Center [51 Bergen St. between Boerum Place and Dean Street in Boerum Hill, (347) 560–3641], www.theinvisibledog.org.

OTHER

ART, "COME CLOSER TO ME" OPEN-ING RECEPTION: Taking its title from Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," artist Patrick Jacobs' exhibit tion features sculpture, printmaking, and a room-sized installation. Free. 7–9 pm. Pierogi Gallery [177 N. Ninth St. between Bedford and Driggs avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 599– 2144], www.pierogi2000.com.

SAT, JAN. 17

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, "RUN FOR YOUR WIFE": The Gallery Players present Ray Cooney's British farce. 2 pm and 8 pm. Gallery Players [199 14th St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (212) 352-3101], www.

DANCE, WILLIAM PARKER AND THE TONE MOTION THEATRE: A trib ute to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr and the fifth part of Parker's work "Flower in a Stained Glass Window," performed by chamber group the ransformational Music Ensemble \$15–\$25. 8 pm. Roulette (509 Atlantic Ave. at Third Avenue in Boerum Hill), ww.roulette.org.

MUSIC, MATTHEW TEARDROP, BAY UNO, ELIOT PRIDE, FAKE CHAT-TER: Free. 8 pm. Pete's Candy Store [709 Lorimer St. at Richardson Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302–3770], www.petescandystore.com.

DANCE, "DESTINY": The Restoration Dance Theatre dance company celebrates the life and times of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. \$15 and \$20. 7 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University [DeKalb and Flatbush

See 9 DAYS on page 8



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Hare transplants!

Exploring gentrification with Brer Rabbit

By Max Jaeger The Brooklyn Paper

isplacement — thereby hangs a tale. A Bedford-Stuyvesant artist and her collaborators are exploring gentrification through the twin lenses of African folk tales and funk music, with a production called "Brer Rabbit

the Opera: A Funky Meditation on Gentrification." And you can get a sneak-peak at a work-in-progress performance of the show at Bric House in Fort Greene on Jan. 22 and 23

The script takes its cues from folk stories of the wily rabbit — a character known practically everywhere the African Diaspora has touched, the artist said.

'I was really interested in the idea of briar patches as a metaphor for predominantly black neighborhoods," said performance artist Aisha Cousins. "One of the most famous stories is where he gets caught by his nemesis, and the way he gets out of it is he tricks his nemesis into throwing him into a briar patch under the pretense that he'll die but he escapes, because he was actually born

Cousins traveled around Brooklyn collecting folks' personal stories about gentrification as material for the opera, which is set in a futuristic analog of the predominantly black Bedford-Stuyvesant called the Briar Patch — a neighborhood that, like the Bedford-Stuyvesant of today, is at a tipping point.

'I was interested in unique things about gentrifying black neighborhoods — what's there, what's lost — and cultural loss was a major theme," Cousins said.

Cousins wrote the script, and Greg Tate's Burnt Sugar the Arkestra Chamber will

perform the music. The Arkestra is reminis-





Hop-era: (Pictured top) Musicians and cast members of "Brer Rabbit the Opera: A Funky Meditation on Gentrification." (Above) Mazz Swift rehearses a song from from the show at Bric House in Fort Greene.

cent of immortal funk band Parliament Funkadelic - and like George Clinton's group of extra-terrestrial groove jockeys, the Arkestra's versifications aren't always G-rated, Cousins said.

"It's funky, but at a certain

point, there is language and innuendos where, if your kids under 13, you might have to start explaining things you don't want to explain," she said.

The performance marks a departure for Cousins, whose previous projects include an

MUSIC

"Brer Rabbit the Opera: A Funky Meditation on Gentrification" at Bric House (647 Fulton St. between Rockwell and Ashland places in Fort Greene, www.bricarts-media.org). Jan. 22 and 23 at 8 pm. \$15.

alternate census of African-Americans in Weeksville and re-mapping streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant with the names of black historical figures.

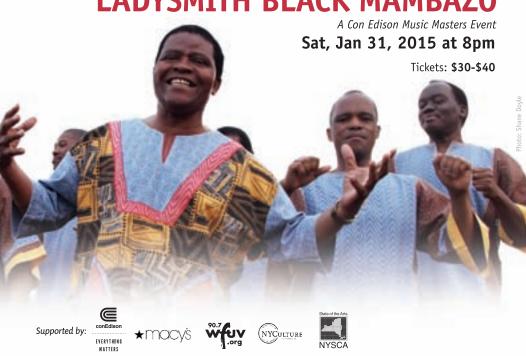
"The pieces that I do are usually much more low-key -usually performance art in the museum sense," said Cousins. "They don't usually go on stage. It was really interesting working with people who think about how to stage things. It's really amazing watching Greg compose the music.'

Cousins, who has lived in Bedford-Stuyvesant since 1989, said she was inspired by the neighborhood's auickonset gentrification, which is shifting the area from neigh-

borhood to for-sale good. "It's weird to be in a place that's kind of become a commodity for other people," she



LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO



BrooklynCenter.org or 718-951-4500 (Tue-Sat, 1pm-6pm) Whitman Theatre at Brooklyn College (2) to Flatbush Avenue / on-site paid parking available



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236 Kane Street between Court and Clinton on the F/G line at Bergen and Smith Office tel: 718-875-1550 ext 2000

Thursday, January 22 8:00 PM \$18 (includes opening reception)

Do You Believe in Love? Tova claims she has made more than 550 matches, and you'll believe it when you

meet her in this surprising documentary. A paraplegic, she nevertheless conducts a successful matchmaking business, taking a tough-love approach and spe-



cializing in finding matches for people with disabilities. Directed by Dan Wasserman (50 mins). Post-screening Q&A with director.

Saturday, January 24 8:00 PM \$15



Hanna's Journey A German business student heads to the Holy Land with selfish motives, volunteering with a Holocaust survivor and with the mentally disabled to burnish her résumé. She slowly becomes more interested in both German and her own family history, not to mention the Israeli man who sets her on a

path of self-discovery while indulging his fascination with Germany. Directed by Julia von Heinz (100 mins). Postscreening Q&A with director.

Sunday, January 25 7:00 PM \$15

The Green Prince How did the son of a top Hamas

leader become an Israeli spy? This documentary about the relationship between one of Israel's most prized informants and the Shin Bet agent who risked his career to



protect him is a gripping story of intrigue, betrayal and friendship. Directed by Nadav Schirman (95 mins).

\$36 for entire series. Buy tickets online at www.kanestreet.org/IFF or at the door.

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Rollin' rollin' rollin'

Sufjan Stevens scores arsty rodeo film

By Robert Ham

for The Brooklyn Paper

hat is hairier than evening rush-hour on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway? How about getting up close with a raging 2,000-pound bull.

Indie rock superstar Sufjan Stevens will present his latest project, "Round-Up," a movie filmed at one of the oldest rodeos in the country, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Jan. 20–22. The work follows his 2007 piece for the Fort Greene cultural institution "The BQE," which featured footage of Interstate 278 paired with a live soundtrack.

Ditmas Park filmmakers Alex and Aaron Craig collaborated with Stevens on the project. The brothers said they put an artistic twist on the footage of bucking bulls and broncos they filmed at the Pendleton Round-Up in Oregon by showing it in slow motion and setting it to a modern classical score. The result is a dreamlike and surprisingly beautiful look at one of America's oldest competitive sports. It is also a very candid

one, said Aaron Craig. "Most people see events



Even Stevens: Indie music darling Sufjan Stevens. (Pictured top) A still from "Round-Up."

like these from afar," he said. "They see the men getting thrown around on horses and bulls and think they're very manly, which they are. We wanted to show a real human perspective by showing them up close. You see the stress and worry they have before they're about to get tossed around."

The Craig siblings said they were able to achieve this by gaining unprece-

dented access to the Pendleton Round-Up, getting upclose and personal with some of the riders and other people behind the scenes of the 105-year-old rodeo. The only hitch was that they had to look the part.

"We weren't allowed to wear anything but Western clothing when we were there," Aaron Craig said. "Our first stop was a store so we could get some jeans

Saratoga

Ballfields:

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PS 178, 2163 Dean St.

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6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The Community Parks Initiative is

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need it most. NYC Parks will rebuild

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want to provide input? Visit nyc.gov/

parks/cpi and share your ideas by

filling out an online form.

www.nyc.gov/parks

Yandoli at christopher.yandoli@

parks.nyc.gov or 718.965.8992.

January 21, 2015

FILM

"Round-Up" plays at Brooklyn Academy of Music, BAM Harvey Theater [30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636–4100, www.bam. org] Jan. 20–25 at 7:30 pm. Tickets start at \$30.

and cowboy hats that we had to wear the whole time we were filming."

Initially conceived as a five-minute video, "Round-Up" turned into a much larger endeavor once the Craigs and Stevens worked through the 60 hours of footage they had captured. The film is now feature-length, with a score that will be played live by Stevens and classical quartet Yarn/Wire at each screening.

"Sufjan was really inger of the

"Surjan was really involved every step of the way," said Aaron Craig. "When we showed him an hour-long cut, he said, 'Now that you know all the footage, start from scratch and do it all over again.' He was right, too. We did know the footage better and I think it turned out better the second time around."

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 6 avenues in Downtown, (718) 488–1624], www.brooklyn. liu.edu/kumbletheater.

OTHER

LET'S MARCH: Kids learn about civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.. Free with Museum admission. 11:30 am. Brooklyn Children's Museum [145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights, (718) 735–4400], www. brooklynkids.org.

SPORTS, PINBALL TOURNA-MENT: The best of New York's pinball players gather to play for cash prizes. \$10. 12:30 pm. Sunshine Laundromat and Pinball [860 Manhattan Ave. at Milton St. in Greenpoint, (646) 415–8440], www.modernpickellour come

pinballnyc.com.

FILM, "OUR FRIEND, MARTIN": Animated film uses
historical footage of the civil
rights leader Martin Luther
King Jr. Free with Museum
admission. 12:30 pm. Brooklyn Children's Museum [145
Brooklyn Ave. at 5t. Marks
Avenue in Crown Heights,
(718) 735–4400], www.
brooklynkids.org.

(718) 735–4400J, www. brooklynkids.org. FILM, "WHY ARE YOU STILL ALIVE?": Part of the Russian Film Series. Free. 4 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch [Flatbush Ave. at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope, (718) 230–2100J, www.brooklynpubliclibrary. org/branch_library_detail. jsp?branchpageid=265.

JAY'S MEATBALL CLASS: Learn to cook meatballs with Jay Goldstein from Chop Happy. \$30. 5–10 pm. Court Tree Collective [371 Court St. between Carroll Street and First Place in Carroll Gardens, (718) 422– 7806], www.courttree.com.

SUN, JAN. 18

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, DIA DE LOS TRES REYES CELEBRATION: EI Puente celebrates el Dia de los Tres Reyes, or the Three Kings Day, with a show commemorating the Three Kings' journey. Free. 1 pm and 5 pm. El Puente [211 S. Fourth St. at Roebling Street in Williamsburg, (718) 387–0404], www.elpuente. us.

MUSIC, TOM FLASH, WICKED KIND, DIET JESUS: \$7.8 pm. Trash Bar [256 Grand St. at Driggs Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 599–1000), www.thetrashbar.com.

MUSIC, HORSE MEAT DISCO: \$25 (\$20 in advance). 10 pm. Output [74 Wythe Ave. at N. 12th Street in Williamsburg, (917) 333–1000], www.outputclub.com.

OTHER

WINTER BIRD WATCHING: Free. 11 am. Prospect Park Audubon Center [Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park, (718) 287–3400], www. prospectpark.org/audubon.

ART, DRINK & DRAW: Weekly figure drawing class; model, crayons, and paper provided, or bring your own materials. Free (2-drink minimum). 10:30 pm. Macri Park Bar [462 Union Ave. at Metropolitan Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 599–4999], www.macripark.com.

MON, JAN. 19

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, "THE LEGACY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVE-MENT THROUGH THE ARTS": Moving Mountains Theatre Company presents a show on how the civil rights movement in America has been depicted in the arts from the 1920s to the present day. \$10. 2 pm. Kumble Theater at Long Island University [DeKalb and Flatbush avenues in Downtown, (718) 488–1624], www.brooklyn.liu.edu/kumbletheater.

OTHER

"COME SHARE THE DREAM":
BAM's 29th Annual Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. Featuring
a keynote address by Dr.
Cornel West and music
performances by the New
York Fellowship Mass Choir.
Hosted by Borough President Eric Adams. 10:30 am.
Brooklyn Academy of Music
[30 Lafayette Ave. between
Ashland Place and St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene, (718)
636–4100], www.bam.org.

RADING, MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.: Celebrate the civil rights leader with Tammy Hall as she weaves together tales from around the world. Free. 2–3 pm. Lefferts Historic Homestead [452 Flatbush Ave. between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway in Park Slope, (718) 789–2822], www.

prospectpark.org.

COMEDY, THE MEHRAN

SHOW: Comedian Mehran
Khaghani hosts a weekly
comedy show, with celebrity and comedian guests
joining him on stage. \$10

(\$8 in advance). 9 pm. Union
Hall [702 Union St. at Fifth
Avenue in Park Slope, (718)
638–4400], www.unionhallny.com.

TUES, JAN. 20

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, "LET THE RIGHT ONE IN": The National Theatre of Scotland presents a bloody romance about the love affairs of the undead. \$35.8 pm. St. Ann's Warehouse [29 Jay St. between John and Plymouth streets

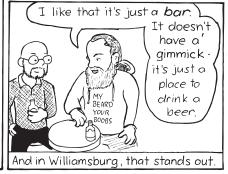
NYC Parks

BAR SCRAWL



So I joined them, with a hot buttered rum (\$10) for additional warmth.

The bar has a decent bottled beer selection (no taps), cheap wine at happy hour, and a list of good-but-not-great cocktails (\$10-12) It's a simple place, but...



Billet and Bellows [177 Grand St. between Bedford and Driggs avenues in Williamsburg, (347)294–4642, www.billetandbellows.com]. Open Sun–Wed, 4 pm–2 am; Thu–Sat, 4 pm–2 am.

in Dumbo, (718) 254–8779], www.stannswarehouse.org. THEATER, "THE MISER":

Brave New World Repertory performs an adaptation to Moliere's comedy "The Miser," using the centuries-old comedy of manners to explore the economic dependency of today's millennials. \$18.7 pm. The Grand Prospect Hall [263 Prospect Avenue between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Park Slope, (212) 352–3101], www. bravenewworldrep.org.

OTHER

COMEDY, "THE FANCY SHOW": Producers Michael Joyce, Langston Kerman, Lane Pieschel, Simmons McDavid, and Jenny Zigrino share the stage with local talent. Free. 8 pm. Bar Reis [375 Fifth Ave. between Fifth and Sixth streets in Park Slope, (718) 974–2412].

WED, JAN. 21 PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, JASON VIEAUX: Neighborhood Classics presents the Grammynominated guitarist. \$15. 7 pm. P.S. 321 [180 Seventh Avenue between First and Second streets in Park

Second streets in Park Slope, (718) 499–2412]. OTHER

FILM, "A RAISIN IN THE SUN": Part of the library's African Americans in '60s Hollywood series. Free. 7 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch [Flatbush Ave. at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope, (718) 230–2100], www.brooklynpubliclibrary. org.

THURS, JAN. 22

PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, NATIONAL BUSKER DAY: Street and subway performers. \$10 (suggested donation). 7 pm. Spike Hill Tavern [184 Bedford Ave. at N. Seventh Street in Williamsburg, (718) 218–9737], www.spikehill.com.

DANCE, "SOCIAL DANCE 1-8 INDEX": Choreographer Moriah Evans explore how people dance together and build social relationships through choreographic pathways that are known and practiced in dancing. \$5.8 pm. Issue Project Room [22 Boerum Pl. at Livingston Street in Downtown, (718) 330–0313], www.issueprojectroom.org.

MUSIC, KID MILLIONS, MICK BARR, SARAH BERN-STEIN, STUART POPEJOY, GDFX, AVA MENDOZA, BRAT PITT: \$7.8 pm. Silent Barn (603 Bushwick Ave. between Jefferson and Melrose streets in Bushwick), silentbarn.org.

OTHER

SALSA PARTY: Move with some of Brooklyn's best salsa dancers at the Museum's bi-annual Salsa Party. The party begins with a dance lesson and continues with salsa dancing and performances by professional dance teams. Free with museum admission. 6–9:30 pm. Brooklyn Museum [200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638–5000],

www.brooklynmuseum.org.
TALK, HENRY LOUIS GATES,
JR. AND FIVE CENTURIES
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY: Harvard scholar
explores the history of African-Americans, highlighting the social, political, and
cultural legacies that have
emerged from the past five
centuries of American history. \$20. 6:30 pm. Brooklyn
Historical Society [128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street
in Brooklyn Heights, (718)
222–4111], www.brooklyn-

history.org.

TALK, THOMAS MERTON

CENTENARY: Christopher
Beha of Harper's Magazine,
novelist Colm Toibin, and
author Paul Elie discuss
the writings of poet and
activist Thomas Merton.
Free. 7 pm. Brooklyn Public
Library's Central branch
[Flatbush Ave. at Eastern
Parkway in Grand Army
Plaza in Park Slope, (718)
230–2100], www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org.

READING, RUTH BROWN:

The Brooklyn Paper's arts and entertainment editor launches her new book "Coffee Nerd," a funny but practical guide to the modern coffee world. The event will include a coffee tasting. Free. 7:30 pm. Greene Grape Annex (753 Fulton St. at S. Portland Avenue in Fort Greene), greenlight-bookstore.com.

FRI, JAN. 23

PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, CLASSICAL MUSIC IN A GOTHIC CHAPEL: Share masterpieces of music with friends in Green-Wood's Historic Chapel, with refreshments available. \$10. 7–10 pm. Green-Wood Cemetery [Fifth Avenue and 25th Street in Greenwood Heights, (718) 768–7300], www.green-wood com

www.green-wood.com.

MUSIC, "LUMINOUS NIGHT":
Grace Chorale of Brooklyn
presents "Luminous Night,"
a concert for chorus and
string quartet. Selections
include "Language of the
Birds," "Luminous Night of
the Soul," and Beethoven's
"Elegischer Gesang." \$15.
7 pm. Saint Ann & The Holy
Trinity Church [157 Montague St. between Clinton
and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 707–1411],
www.gracechorale.org.

MUSIC, ZAK SMITH: \$8.7 pm. ShapeShifter Labs (18 Whitwell Pl. between Third and Fourth avenues in Gowanus), www.shapeshifter-

lab.com.

MUSIC, PREGNANT, MISTER
LIES, NICHOLAS NICHOLAS: \$7.8 pm. Silent Barn
(603 Bushwick Ave. between Jefferson and Melrose streets in Bushwick),
silentharn org.

silentbarn.org.

MUSIC, BROOKLYN CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY: Performing Prokofiev's "Sonata in C major for cello and piano, Op. 119" and "Sonata in F minor for violin and piano, Op. 80," as well as Schuman's "Trio in C minor for piano, violin, and cello, Op. 110." Free. 8 pm. First Unitarian Congregational Society (116 Pierrepont St. at Monroe Place in Brooklyn Heights), www.brooklyn-

chambermusicsociety.org.
MUSIC, ERIK DEUTSCH AND
THE JAZZ OUTLAWS:
Free. 10 pm. BAM Cafe (30
Lafayette Ave. between
Ashland Place and 5t. Felix
Street in Fort Greene),
www.bam.org/programs/
bamcafe-live.

DANCE, "WINTER FOLLIES": Spoke the Hub dance studio hosts its annual showcase. \$20 (\$15 in advance). 7:30 pm. Gowanus Art Center [295 Douglass St. between Third and Fourth avenues in Gowanus, (347) 529–6473], www.gowanusartandproduction.com.

SAT, JAN. 24

PERFORMANCE

MUSIC, "LUMINOUS NIGHT": Grace Chorale of Brooklyn presents a concert for chorus and string quartet. \$15.7 pm. All Saints Church [286-88 Seventh Avenue at Seventh St. in Park Slope, (718) 707–1411], www. gracechorale.org.

gracechorale.org.

DANCE, CHOPIN — DANCES
FOR PIANO: The Mariinsky
Ballet performs to selections by Chopin. Starting at
\$30. 7:30 pm. BAM Howard
Gilman Opera House (30
Lafayette Ave. between
Ashland Place and St. Felix
Street in Fort Greene),
www.bam.org.

MUSIC, MY BODY: EP release

MUSIC, MY BODY: EP release party. \$10. 8 pm. Cameo Gallery [93 N. Sixth St. between Wythe Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302–1180], www. cameony.net.

MUSIC. STEVE SULLIVAN

AND THE BOARD OF DI-RECTORS: Free. 9:30 pm. BAM Cafe (30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene), www.bam.org/ programs/bamcafe-live.



Go west: Public intellectual and activist Dr. Cornel West will give the keynote address at the annual Brooklyn Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Jan. 19.

AWP 9

Strong, silent type

Ridgite in quest to be 'Baddest Woman on the Planet'

hen Bonesaw Jessie Brooks steps in the ring, she doesn't say a word. She glowers, chops her opponent across the chest, grapples, and often, suplexes the unlucky foe and holds on, bent over all the way backwards as her rival squirms like a mouse under a boot-heel for the threecount. Wrestling aficionados also know her as "the Baddest Woman on the Planet."

She's competitive, she's tough as nails, and very much has a 'take no prisoners' mentality, which I think is very apparent to anybody who is able to watch any of her matches," fellow professional wrestler Kacee Carlisle said.

When I meet her at a Starbucks near her Bay Ridge home, Brooks looks less tough. Real name Jessyka Perea, her face is tense, hands clamped between her knees during our interview. But one thing is consistent with her ring demeanor. She doesn't speak much. The talking is largely left to Kris Levin, coowner of Valkyrie Women's Professional Wrestling, a Brooklyn-centric, independent promotion with all-female talent that Brooks and Carlisle are part of. In an hour and a half of combined interviews, Brooks won't speak unprompted, and her answers will seldom if ever last longer than 10 seconds.

Valkyrie got started early last summer. Women's pro wrestling was illegal in New York for decades and the ban wasn't lifted until 1972. But there has never, as far as Levin or I could find, been an all-women promotion in the city. As a longtime prowrestling referee and fan, Levin had trouble comprehending that.

What shocked us was that not only was this the first women's wrestling event in Brooklyn, but it was the first ever in New York City," Levin said.

Pro wrestling during the past several decades has emphasized swimsuit looks over grappling aptitude, but it was

Nathan's

By Nathan Tempey



Shining a light on everyday Brooklyn

not always so. Levin blames the advent of television.

"When you watch wrestling on TV, it's all women in bikinis, women who are models,' he said. "It's not women who treat it as a real sport."

Levin, Brooks, and the rest of Valkyrie are trying to swing the pendulum back. Levin is scrawny with wavy hair and a mustache, and has a vaudevillian look when he suits up in a ref uniform. Brooks's wrestling outfit, a black leotard accented only with a golden sash, would not seem out of place in archival footage of a match from the 1950s. A typical Valkyrie show includes a stable of local talent and a handful of wrestlers flown in for the night, all performing modern pro wrestling's careful ballet of violence. Comic-book plot-lines and crowd interaction make it clear as a bootprint who is a baby-face, or good guy, and who is a heel.

Valkyrie is coming up on its fifth show, its first outside of Ludus Wrestling Center in Sunset Park, which seats about 90. An October event was packed and the crowd, 90 percent male, was enthusiastic, chanting things like "This is awesome!" And, at a heel: "You have herpes!" And, during Brooks's match: "This is

wrestling!' Brooks, who looks burlier in the ring, if not taller than her



Outside the ring, Jessyka Perea (above) works as a home health aide and is going to massage school. But at wrestling shows (right) she is Bonesaw Jessie Brooks, a powerhouse with a "serial-killer style."

5-foot-4, 125-pound billing, is 3-1 in the new league. The outcomes of matches may be predetermined, and having a winning streak may be referred to in the industry as "getting put over," but title belts command higher fees, increase Tshirt sales, and define job prospects. So for Brooks it matters that, to the small but devoted group of fans paying attention, she is one of the women in the New York indie wres-

tling scene to beat. Getting to this point was not a sure thing. Brooks was a wrestling fan growing up in Borough Park—her mom and aunt were casual followers who loved Hulk Hogan, she was more of a Randy Savage girl. But it wasn't until she was a junior at Purchase College, majoring in political science, that she considered it might be something she could do.

"Somebody told me there was a wrestling school in Pennsylvania and the next week I was taking classes," she said.

That school is run by Ring of Honor, a middle-of-theroad, American-style indie promotion that has its matches screened on dozens of local TV stations nationwide and has groomed several wrestlers for the big-time in recent years. Its gym is in a small town off Interstate 95 between Trenton and Philadelphia. Brooks trained there two or three days a week for a year, squeezing the bus and train rides, four hours each way, into a full college schedule. When she started, she kept to herself, to an extreme, according to one of her trainers.

"When she came in she was super quiet, super reserved. She rarely spoke — which is



good," said Hunter Johnston, who wrestles as Delirious and runs the league, "In wrestling you want to keep your mouth shut and your ears open. But she was so quiet, there was a while there where I didn't think

this was going to work.' Still. Brooks kept showing up, and her persistence set her apart from the bulk of new arrivals at the school, who typically stop coming within weeks, according to Johnston.

"The majority quit," he said. 'Jessie is an exception." And then she had a break-

"One day out of nowhere it all clicked and her intensity level and her passion that she would exude in the

ring all came out," Johnston said. "It was like a lightbulb

went on.' Suddenly, "when she gave a chop in your chest it would be like a saw cutting through your bone," he recalled. Jess Perea, the wannabe wrestler who had come as all new students do, without a stage name, became Bonesaw Jessie Brooks.

During his 15 years in the business, Johnston says he has seen the acceptance of women's wrestling in indie wrestling grow.

"Over the years, female wrestling has been accepted much more for its athleticism and competition and skill whereas years ago female wrestling was more of a dogand-pony show to spotlight the attractiveness of women," he said. "Of course looks still play a role. They play a big role."

Making a living as a pro wrestler of any gender is tough. The biggest show going is World Wrestling Entertainment, which pays its athletes enough that they don't work collard greens.

tion their own health insurance.

of wrestlers, Brooks says she wouldn't take a job there un-

"I wouldn't want to deal

Instead, she aspires to wres-

"They treat women as equal

For now, she's working as a

to men and take women's wres-

tling seriously," Brooks said.

home health aide and wrestling

a handful of times per month,

with Valkyrie and other inde-

pendent promotions, mostly in

the Northeast. She wrestled

once for Ring of Honor, after

debuting in its developmental

league in New Jersey. In four

years, the sport has taken her

as far as the Chicago suburbs.

the home base of Shimmer, a

women's promotion that tapes

events three times a year, and

Georgia, where someone told

her she has a Brooklyn accent

help hyping the crowd from Ju-

lius Smokes, the Devil's Son-

in-Law, a seasoned wrestler

and East New York native who

boasts that he is the indus-

try's "original hip-hop man-

ager" and who for years backed

Fort Greene's Homicide, a big

name in Ring of Honor. Dur-

ing Brooks's matches, Smokes

stalks the perimeter of the ring,

banging on the mat, barking

like a dog, and mimicking the

sound of a burst of automatic

Smokes is African Amer-

ican and Brooks has Colom-

bian and African ancestry. As a

manager talking trash, Smokes

frames rivalries in racial terms

"ebony diamonds," and favors

boasts that involve food. In a

promo video ahead of Brooks's

match against fellow Ring of

Honor alum Mia Yim, who is of

Korean and African descent, he

bellows, "We like our chicken

wing deep-fried, not that soggy

Chinese food." And, in assess-

ing his and Brooks's prospects

in 2015: "It's going to be the

year of the pork chops and the

-he calls himself and Brooks

gunfire ("Brrrrat!")

Lately, she has been getting

she doesn't.

tle in Japan, because of how

fans and promoters there ap-

with a lot of the drama that

der any circumstances.

goes into that," she said.

proach the sport.

day jobs, and schedules them Carlisle said that Brooks's such that they can't, but is nosoft-spokenness could be a handicap in the long run.

torious for keeping wrestlers listed as independent contrac-"Nowadays there's a lot of tors and forcing them to pay for emphasis on being able to give a their own travel, not to men-

good interview," she said. On that front, Smokes said Brooks has her work cut out Because of its reputation and the constant travel it requires

for her, to a point. 'If she wants to step out into the limelight she definitely

needs to step it up, but at the same time that is where Julius Smokes comes in," he said.

Johnston said she can do iust fine playing the silent-butdeadly ring assassin.

"The serial-killer style demeanor when she's in the ring, that's what you emphasize, he said.

Her withering glare, Brooks said, took no practice. But when it comes to career aspirations, Smokes hopes she can come around on World Wrestling Entertainment.

"Her and I could go to the next level. This is bigger than Valkyrie. I don't know if she knows it yet," he said. On a recent Friday Brooks

was practicing with Levin at Gorilla Training Camp, a boxing and pro-wrestling gym a few-minute walk from the Bushwick line, in a part of Queens where single-family homes share blocks with one-story factories. Levin was nursing a bum hip – he said the joint "went out" the week prior. This was the pair's third time practicing there, having decamped from Ludus in Sunset Park for reasons they don't want to disclose, and the false ceiling was too low for a demonstration of Brooks's signature suplex.

Brooks and Levin stuck to chain wrestling, a training technique where two wrestlers grapple and improvise their way through a sequence of holds, communicating only through whispers, and not often, each submission hold giving way to an inventive escape and reversal. Forty-five minutes in, Brooks was leaning against the ropes for a portrait by our photographer and Levin told her to "give him your wrestler face.'

When they resumed training and Brooks was holding evin in a camel-clutch, with him face-down, and her grabbing him by the chin and yanking back, I realized that she was grinning, and had been almost the entire time.

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Nets for sale!

Prokhorov looks to unload

By Noah Hurowitz The Brooklyn Paper

The Nets' Russian oligarch owner is looking to unload

Reputed billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov has hired an international investment bank to shop around Brooklyn's home team, Bloomberg News reported on Tuesday. A rep for the former Russian presidential candidate confirmed that the team is for sale, but claimed that is nothing new.

"As we have said for many months, ownership is always open to listening to offers that's just good business," spokeswoman Ellen Pinchuk

said in an e-mail. "There is nothing imminent in terms of a sale of any stake in the

One expert said that there are going to be a lot of tak-

"If this comes to the market, everybody and his brother would be looking at this thing," said Sal Galatioto, whose firm Galatioto Sports Partners has been involved as an advisor in the sales of several professional basketball teams. "It's Brooklyn, it's Barclays, there's sizzle. Not just people from the New York metro area would be interested but wealthy people throughout the United States

Bloomberg's anonymously sourced report stated that Prokhorov wants to sell his 80 percent stake and has retained the firm Evercore Partners to broker a deal.

and across the world"

A representative of Evercore declined to comment on the matter as did Nets spokesman Barry Baum, who deferred to Pinchuk's state-

Prokhorov dropped more than \$200 million in 2010 to buy his majority stake in the team and 45 percent of ownership of Barclays Center. Given the \$2 billion sale of the Los Angeles Clippers in August amid the fallout over owner Donald Sterling's racist rants, commentators have speculated that Prokhorov could walk away with a healthy profit despite the Nets' lackluster on-court



Kevin Garnett is restrained by a man with hand tattoos following his fight.

Trying an alcohol-free January

the month of January to prove to my 11-year-old

that I can. I made an offhand comment on one of the last days of the holiday, something about needing to quit drinking.

"I don't think you could do it," Oscar said, that tone in his voice that always lights a fire under me.

How could I let my child think that alcohol was so important, had such a grip over me, that I couldn't give it up? What kind of role model would I be then?

"I absolutely can," I said. "One month, no alcohol."

I was excited, actually. I had a strange relationship with denial of things I liked. On Yom Kippur every year, the Jewish holiday that restricts all food and liquids for 24 hours, I was always somewhat sad to start eating again. There was something about having the willpower to give things up that made me feel good.

But when I told a friend I haven't seen in a while about the bet, he scoffed.

"Nice. Your own son thinks you're an alcoholic, you're on a rough road. '

"I'm not an alcoholic,"

Fearless Parenting By Stephanie Thompson

But was I? I watched what I drank, but certainly over the holidays I consumed a fair amount. I had taken up whiskey a while back and was excited to bring friends bottles of new local spirits that I encouraged them to share. I'd been enjoying a fair bit of wine and beer and champagne as well, and really looked forward to it. What actually constituted alcoholism, I wondered? I went to the internet.

According to the Mayo Clinic, you suffer from alcoholism if you have problems controlling your drinking, are preoccupied with alcohol, continuing to use alcohol even when it causes problems, have to drink more to get the same effect, or have withdrawal symptoms when you rapidly decrease or stop drinking. If you have alcoholism, you can't consistently pre-dict how much you'll drink,

how long you'll drink, or what consequences will occur from your drinking. You may not be able to cut back or quit without help.

A week-plus in, I have not had a sip of alcohol to drink although, full disclosure, I used cooking wine in a recipe. Oscar called me on it, though I don't think that counts.

It has been hard at moments, especially as my husband is not participating in the bet. I have looked longingly at his glasses of wine, at his pouring of a bourbon. I felt like a buzz-kill at a dinner with my in-laws and at a bar with friends, having to refuse a delicious punch. I couldn't figure out what to drink except boring seltzer with lime.

The "preoccupation" part of the Mayo Clinic definition of alcoholism certainly applied to me and most other people I hung out with. It was

a great subject of conversation for sure, but I wondered maybe if I stopped, could there possibly be other more interesting topics that arose in its place, other things I might think or talk about more with

But it's hard to change things when the world around you goes on as normal.

the absence of alcohol?

"Let's grab a drink," a friend e-mailed after I'd had a hard day, Oscar not having told me of his whereabouts after school, leaving me waiting and wondering for more than an hour because his phone wasn't working. (The people on the other end of 911 think I might have been a little overzealous in my concern, but hey, it was unusual.)

I might have been on board if I was drinking, but as it was. I proclaimed tiredness and fell into bed at 8:30.

Physically, I thought maybe quitting drinking could make me feel great, but I've actually felt a little out of sorts. It occurred to me that there are many reported benefits of moderate alcohol consumption, especially wine, which has been shown to protect against heart disease, colds, dementia, diabetes, gallstones

and even erectile dysfunction (not a problem for me, luckily, but good to know.)

One article, from MedicalDaily.com, cited research from the Catholic University of Campobasso that showed four drinks a day for men and two drinks a day for women ideally wine with meals a la the Mediterranean diet can help reduce the risk of death by 18 percent.

Was I actually harming myself by stopping my moderate drinking?

This was confusing. Wasn't I trying to make the point that drinking wasn't necessary to my son? But then, was it? Should I encourage him to drink when he's older?

Either way, I guess what I'm actually going to teach - and learn—through this exercise of restraint is that one should be able to do anything one sets out to do. And the fear for me, for myself and my kids, is about the addiction to any behavior. It is not the doing but the overdoing with most things that can be a problem, and if you absolutely cannot stop, what does that say?

All I can really say now is that I'm looking forward to February.

Garnett's flame-out

...and Crummy wants to buy the Nets!

hat I love about being a bird in Brooklyn is there is never any shortage of crap to talk about.

First, a dustup not involving yours truly — finally. In Monday's game, the guy that almost everyone in the NBA seems to hate, Dwight Howard, got into it with a player whose championship resume he wishes he had, Kevin Garnett. A foul call on Garnett, and Howard's existence in adjacent space, sent Garnett into a rage that demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt that our elder statesman could use some time off. KG whipped the ball into Howard's back and followed it up with a head-butt that I couldn't have executed better myself, except he missed the bridge of the nose and got a slap for his trouble.

My personal favorite moment was Garnett's "Oooh, I just want to mess him up so bad" head rub, followed by the "I'm cool, I'm cool" walk opposite the Rockets bench, then another trot towards Howard, only to be restrained by a small man with white hair. Classic basketball tough guy. What could D12 have said

to KG to cause him to blow his top like a can of Schaefer after I carry a case back from the store on the bumper of a delivery truck? I've got some theories. Howard said James Harden was a better defender than Garnett, and meant it. KG asked How-

ard to help him get a day off via suspension. Howard mentioned Barclays Center's weather-proofing problem.

Whatever the case, the scuffle — I wouldn't call it a fight — was a sign of life in a Barclays Center that has approached the energy level of the morgue in recent weeks. But it came at a cost larger than Garnett's one-game suspension. Watching KG lose his cool humanized Garnett for me, and it might have completely ruined that Big Ticket mystique.

Beyond the scuffle, there are rumblings in the rafters that Mikhy P., my Russian landlord, is looking to sell the Nets. Billionaires looking for a trophy asset saddled with high-priced, rapidly aging talent, get your checkbooks out!

That dude Ballmer in LA paid two billion for the Clippers — Donald "Why Are You Taking Pictures With Minorities" Sterling's Clippers! Imagine what the Brook-

with Crummy the Pigeon lvn team could fetch. Enough for a lifetime of bar tabs, I'd be willing to wager. Well, maybe not my bar tabs, the way I toss

Flagrant

them back, but somebody's. What the heck. While my editors are still giving me this space I'll put it out there:

Hey, Prokhy. Crummy here. Been hanging in the rafters since the Rust Bowl opened a couple years back. Got a good view from up there. Really got a sense of how things run. Jay Z and Beyonce sit in the front row; each year there's a new head coach; the team gets older and worse with every passing season; seems pretty easy. I think I can handle that. Consider that my resume.

Money? Me and the boys will cobble something together, don't you worry about that. And you can't bet your a-- we won't be losing \$144 million in a season. Time to start digging through the recycling.

Speaking of which, spare a buck for a beer?

BRAND...

Continued from page 1

West Elm spokeswoman confirmed, and sell for \$15 and \$29 respectively. The Dumbo store sold out of the items during the holidays, and the online store no longer has any growlers, but the rest remain available on the web.

The spokeswoman refused to acknowledge that the logo, which sandwiches the phrase "Made in Brooklyn," with "Brooklyn" in cursive, between two old-timey arrows, could lead buyers to believe that the products are actually made in Brooklyn. She posed instead that the slogan is meant to describe what is inside each container

"The messaging on these specific pieces was designed to be a fun nod to the potential contents," said Abigail Jacobs, a vice president for brand marketing with the company. "You can fill the growler with lager from Brooklyn Brewery, and the shirt and hat refer to the person wearing them.'

West Elm plays its Brooklyn bona fides big online, touting itself in the "About Us" section of its website as "Born in Brooklyn. At Home in the World." The company's blog is named "Front + Main," after the intersection where the original store sits. around the corner from a second location that sells home goods and kitchenware. And the company is set to lease space in the Empire Stores building, which is currently being redeveloped.

It is true that the chain was founded in Dumbo in 2002, but the founding was done by home-furnishing and kitchenware giant Williams-Sonoma, the parent company of five brands and 603 stores internationally, with headquarters in San Francisco. Nevertheless, Scissura

said he has no hard feelings toward the retailer, in part because it supports Brooklyn's annual design expo.

"West Elm is a great friend and partner, and a big supporter of BKLYN DESIGNS," he said.

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